

VZCZCXRO2089
RR RUEHDBU RUEHSL
DE RUEHNT #1013/01 1691108
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 181110Z JUN 09
FM AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1028
INFO CIS COLLECTIVE
NATO EU COLLECTIVE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 0068
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 0243
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TASHKENT 001013

SIPDIS
DEPARTMENT FOR INL ANDREW BUHLER AND EUR/ACE DEAN FISCHER
ASTANA FOR ALMATY USAID
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PASS TO AMCONSUL ST PETERSBURG
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PASS TO AMCONSUL VLADIVOSTOK
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PASS TO AMCONSUL YEKATERINBURG
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PASS TO AMEMBASSY PODGORICA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS PASS TO AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019/06/18
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [ELAB](#) [KTIP](#) [EAID](#) [UZ](#)
SUBJECT: UZBEKISTAN: NEW IOM REGIONAL HEAD OPTIMISTIC ABOUT FORMAL
REGISTRATION

REF: TASHKENT 343

CLASSIFIED BY: Timothy P. Buckley, Second Secretary, Department of
State, Political and Economic Section; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: On June 16, poloffs met with regional officials
from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and a
prominent Uzbek anti-trafficking NGO to discuss the organization's
status. A new IOM regional coordinator will cover all of Central
Asia for IOM, and he is confident that mistakes made by the
previous country representative can be resolved and that Uzbekistan
will soon register IOM. End summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Poloffs met on June 16 with Zlatko Zigic, the new
Astana-based IOM Regional Coordinator for Central Asia. Zigic is
familiar with Central Asia from previous tours in Ashgabat and
Bishkek, and he explained that IOM wanted to shift its structure to
create a regional hub focused just on the five former Soviet
Central Asian republics rather than cover this region from its
Islamabad office. He is confident this will result in better
project management as well as more regional projects on TIP and
labor migration.

[1](#)3. (C) IOM is still not registered in Uzbekistan, although Zigic is
optimistic that this will happen soon. He candidly noted (please
protect) that the former Almaty-based IOM Director for Kazakhstan
and Uzbekistan, Mahmoud Naderi, was relieved of his duties for
"wrongdoings and mismanagement." (Note: Zigic said that,
although Naderi was responsible for oversight of USG-funded
activities in Uzbekistan, that the programs here were not
impacted.) Unfortunately, the previously reported effort (reftel)
to seek registration in Uzbekistan was adversely impacted by
Naderi's mishandling of the appropriate paperwork. Thus, the
awkward long-term absence of IOM in Uzbekistan is not all the fault
of the government.

[1](#)4. (SBU) In addition to cleaning up the mess from the erstwhile
Uzbekistan director, Zigic also must contend with the ghosts of
Andijon, as he mentioned that the Government of Uzbekistan has not

forgotten that it was IOM which played a central role in transporting Uzbek refugees from Kyrgyzstan to Romania in the aftermath of the incidents in 2005. Nonetheless, Zigic said government officials had indicated that they could accomplish the registration formalities very quickly and a meeting is scheduled for June 17 with the MFA's UN and International Organizations Department. Zigic pointed to the rapid issuance of his multiple-entry, one-year Uzbek visa as a sign the government is ready to back up its encouraging talk with swift action on a fresh registration package. "No one at IOM has ever gotten a visa this quickly," he added. Zigic also stated that he does not expect the Uzbeks to insist on a reduced mandate to prevent another situation in which IOM transports Uzbek citizens.

15. (C) Should IOM receive accreditation, Zigic expects to have chief of mission status and open up a new mission in Tashkent that he would regularly visit. He assured poloffs that IOM would continue to rely on the impressive network of NGOs that already operate in the country, chiefly former TIP Report Hero Nodira Karimova's "Istiqbolli Avlod" (Future Generation), which is presently the project implementer for USG-funded anti-TIP projects. "This restructuring will help us draw a new road map," Zigic commented, "and registration would mean we no longer would have to bring money to the NGO in a suitcase" due to the operating restrictions.

16. (SBU) IOM regional officials have been very impressed by how

TASHKENT 00001013 002 OF 002

well linked Istiqbolli Avlod and its local partner NGOs around the country are with law enforcement agencies. This work has continued in the framework of the no-cost extension as part of the INL project, and IOM was pleased by a recent study tour for officers and NGO officials to Poland. In July, there is also a planned trip to Ankara, Turkey, to increase contacts between Uzbek and Turkish law enforcement agencies since it is a common trafficking destination with visa-free travel for Uzbek nationals. IOM is also planning to work with the World Bank on a joint regional project to address HIV and migration, and Zigic hopes Uzbekistan recognizes projects like this will be in its best interest.

Comment:

17. (SBU) We strongly support IOM's efforts to obtain registration in Uzbekistan, which would add one more international organization to the mix in efforts to build bridges with the international community as a whole. It is also frequently difficult to explain why IOM is not present in the country, so registration would help to normalize the operating environment. It would also be significant if the Uzbeks let bygones be bygones and paved the way for a former Andijon-related antagonist to resume operations.
NORLAND